

7.7.61
Number I.

A
LIBERAL CRITIQUE
ON THE
EXHIBITION for 1794.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Number 1

LIBERAL CRITIQUE

ON THE

EXHIBITION OF 1851

PRICE ONE SHILLING

Entered at Stationer's Hall.

A

1044 d. 11
6

LIBERAL CRITIQUE
ON THE
PRESENT EXHIBITION
OF THE
ROYAL ACADEMY:

BEING

An attempt to correct the National Taste; to ascertain
the state of the Polite Arts at this Period; and to
rescue Merit from Oppression.

BY ANTHONY PASQUIN, ESQ.

Castigatio fine ira.

L O N D O N:

Printed for H. D. SYMONDS, Paternoster-Row, and
J. Mc QUEEN, opposite Exeter-Change, Strand.

MDCCXCIV.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS the limitation and haste necessary in this Work, so much dependent on time, precludes me from entering into an enlarged Critique, I have only commented upon the principal performances of those Artists who are most conspicuous in their several departments: the remainder (the majority of whom are scarce worth powder and shot) I have now left unnoticed, either to become more meritorious, or to be entirely forgotten. In a few instances I have availed myself of the opinion of others.

This Work will be continued occasionally, under the Title of

THE STATE OF THE ARTS AND THE DRAMA;

which is a Performance, very generally desired, as it is notorious, from the influence of tyranny and corruption, that a candid criticism on either is scarcely ever seen.

A CRITIQUE ON THE EXHIBITION.

JOHN OP1E, R. A. No. 29.

THIS is the best of four portraits by the same artist, and is a very significant likeness of Mr. Fuzeli, one of those ungrateful and indolent R. A.'s who leave their academic mother to be illumined and supported by the striplings of the establishment. Mr. Opie has not brought forward this year any thing to surprize the world: he has retained all his old habits, and some of them are bad enough—an indifferent spectator would be led to imagine, that he was concerned in a coarse woollen manufactory, as he seizes all possible occasions to array his personages in that species of apparel, from an emperor to a mendicant, and I believe would bury all his heroes and heroines in the same drapery, notwithstanding an existing act of Parliament, to prohibit the measure—his style of colouring becomes, in my opinion, more defective every year; it is now in all his flesh, but little more then black and white, imperfectly amended by the mixture of brown oker! or some ingredient equally fatal to the purposes of truth. If he is impelled to do this, for the means of producing a *striking effect*, as they phrase it, I will beg leave to suggest that the means are not proportioned to the end.

It is with regret that I feel myself compelled to animadvert with rigour, upon a gentleman, who is certainly distinguished from the *daubing herd* by some genius, but it has been impressed with vulgar ideas, which too frequently overbear the delicate interpositions of taste, which he has faintly imbibed from studying the works of the late President: we have to lament, that original prejudices are so difficult to expunge from the mind. Those elements which we first acquire, leave an indelible impression upon the memory, and the utmost that the most vigorous judgment can do, at a mature time of existence, is not to practise what the fancy has been accustomed to adopt.

B

G. Dr.

G. DUPONT, No. 268.

Mr Quick in the Character of Spado.

This is a spirited likeness of that excellent Comedian, but executed too much in imitation of the late Mr. Gainsborough: The general outline is nearly faithful; but the affectation, visible in those scratches of the hogtool or fitch, over the visage, is disgusting, because it is unnatural. This was the gigantic error in his uncle's portraits, who, perhaps in imitation of Apelles, was accustomed, in the moments of desperation, to make a dash where he could not draw. This portrait is intended for Mr. Harris's gallery, who has engaged this Artist to paint the principal performers of Covent-Garden Theatre.

No. 85. *A Portrait of HIS MAJESTY, by the same Artist.*

I have been often inclined to imagine, that the beams of that divinity which is said to hedge a king, dazzles the optics too forcibly of every Artist who *attempts* to paint them. The figure of the King appears unamiable, presuming, and repulsive; yet all this may be the effect of tremor: and the glare of the scarlet drapery bursts impudently upon our senses, and repels the inquisitiveness of thought, by abashing our inquiries in the first instance. The calm dignity which should appertain to such a personage is not discoverable: It gives me the idea of a proud idiot, presenting himself for admiration, under the consciousness of being unusually fine, and not as the representation of the source of local honor. As the sovereign is not noticeable for effrontery or vanity, this portrait is not adequate to my desires.

THOMAS STOTHARD, R. A. Elect. No. 148.

The Interview between Henry VIII, and the Emperor Charles V.

I congratulate the Royal Academy on the acquisition of such a member as Mr. Stothard, whose education and understanding enables him to rescue the general character of a Royal Academician from the imputation of ignorance, and whose urbane manners render his pre-eminence tolerable to all. I do not hesitate to assert, that this gentleman is the *only* Artist in this country who can comprehend, with keen precision, a subject dependent upon historical fact. It is to be regretted that his figures are not sufficiently finished, but occasionally betray a slovenliness that is incompatible with truth: though the energies of a strong mind, are too frequently regardless of ne-
cessary

cessary littlenesses, yet the frequency of the omission must not be permitted to justify the inattention.

WILLIAM HAMILTON, R. A. No. 70.

The lost Kid found.

This picture is a pretty, but not a capital performance. It has all that *flutter of style* for which our young Artists are now so ridiculously remarkable. The light is so scattered, that it looks like luminousness run mad. The nymph who has caught the kid, looks too aerial, and appears to possess the powers of journeying between heaven and earth. The pencilling of the flesh is delicate, and the kid not ill imagined. I must not dismiss these observations without declaring, that on some former occasions Mr. Hamilton has very forcibly seized my approbation.

No. 89. *The playful Galatea, from Virgil's third Pastoral, by the same Artist.*

This is not a bad personification of a classic idea; but is far from being a chaste picture. Mr. Hamilton appears to me to have imbibed no fixed principles of truth, as he changes his manner as frequently as his garment; and though to be a mannerist in trifles is wrong, not to be a mannerist in essentials, which are immutable, is more faulty. Though grace and greatness should concentrate, and be palpable in every historical design, yet they are frequently misunderstood by our Artists, which gives an air of lunacy to their compositions. Grace may attach itself to objects in their nature trivial, but greatness cannot: whenever I ponder upon greatness, my imagination presents *Michael Angelo*, who usurps the idea.

MR. SHEE. No. 5.

A Portrait of Miss Jerningham.

Delicate, free, and satisfactory: the attitude is graceful, and the face interesting, it has the bland properties of virgin merit, unconscious of vanity.

No. 291. *A whole length Portrait of Mrs. Larkins.*

The contour of this figure does not entirely please me, though it is equal in aggregate merit, to any whole length in the exhibition. The white satin drapery appertaining to this picture is nearly equal to Sir Peter Lely: there is a fascination in the representation

representation of this charming lady's visage, which has due operation upon the observant, although, they have placed her in a corner of the anti-room, as if it was necessary that she should perform quarantine previous to her introduction into better society. But let the beauty and the artist be comforted.

——“ Where *stupid* men bear sway

“ The post of honor is a private station.”

No. 263. *Jeptah's Daughter*, by the same Artist.

Promises every thing that is sublime in the art: in the material point of conception of his subject, he is superior to the President, and nearly equal to Mr. Stothard, his full acquirement of the subordinate requisites, may be produced by unremitting industry. To think correctly, is but the lot of few; to draw correctly, may be accomplished by all.

No. 2. *A Portrait of Mr. Rannie*, by the same Artist.

This portrait, independant of the likeness, which is admirably impressive, is unquestionably one of the best, if not the very best, in the present meager exhibition; and yet from some mean and malign influence it is affixed at the very top of the room. If the noblest exertions of the art, are to be on all occasions locally dishonored, where will be found the man of distinguished talents, who will be ready enough to bring his picture forward, to be neither more nor less than annual sacrifices, to the jealousy of an *academic junto*; who sit jocund in their *buggur-muggur* congress, happy only in having it in their ability to insult safely superior beings, and blighting the wholesome blossoms of modest genius. I will be bold to prophecy, that from such an institution, the public will turn with disgust, and leave such miserably gifted animals, as the knight of Poland, to console each other from sources, which greatness nor virtue knows not. This is one of those low injuries which the oppressed is denied the opportunity of redressing; if he remains silent under such distressing and abasing circumstances, it will be readily conjectured that he supposes himself to have received the usage he is legally entitled to, and if he ventures spiritedly to assert his defence, the malevolent many, will not hesitate to impute that to arrogance and vanity, which is the legitimate and honorable issue of honest indignation. If the primary places in the exhibition were occupied by works of great and genuine merit, the candid critic would be satisfied, but to behold eternally the most despicable daubings obtruding

ing themselves upon the gazer's eye, and, as it were, saying, "damme you shall look at me," is extremely painful to all those, who would generously prefer talents to stupidity, and modesty to impudence; so much is dependant upon situation, that the works of Tintoret and Titian, would be disregarded if hung up in obscure corners, where the light of heaven was imperfectly administered; were even Cæsar reposing in a coal hole, we must be told it was Cæsar, ere we should feel inclined to suppose him godlike, or revere his person; if the place is not appropriate to the picture, the artist must suffer in the common estimation of patronage, however strong his claims may be, arising from his intrinsic worth. How lamentable it is, that there is no precise way of amending this abuse of power: if the aggrieved artist applies to the council, he is informed that his being permitted to exhibit at all, is an act of favour, as the annual display of the art, belongs of right, only to the Royal Academicians, who, however, think it expedient to *invite* other professors to strengthen the exhibition, and as strangers they should give them welcome, and not take every opportunity to insult them, merely because they are inveigled within their gates—what sort of an exhibition the Royal Academicians would produce among themselves, I shall leave the world to determine.

B. WEST, R. A. President.

No. 8. *Edward, the Black Prince, receiving John, King of France, Prisoner, after the Battle of Poitiers.*

This large piece of canvas is intended for His Majesty's Audience-Chamber in Windsor Castle, and certainly does no additional credit to its author, as the subject is ill understood, and not well executed: Though it is the presumed assemblage of warriors, and immediately after a hard fought battle, their faces are as placid, and their habiliments as trim, as if no such event had occurred, or was in agitation. The idea of the horses is assuredly borrowed from Mr. Bayes's cavalry; and the position of the Cardinals, entirely accords with the received notion of ultramontane affection.

No. 132. *The Descent of the Spirit upon Jesus, after his Baptism in Jordan, by the same Artist.*

The waters of Jordan were certainly of a singular nature, if the splashings of this hallowed stream are conveyed by the pencil

oil with aquatic justness. They have the green hue of a stagnant pool, and not the liquid transparency of a limpid brook. The figure of Christ looks like a deserter, who had been recently whipped, and was sneaking off to a surgeon, with a blanket over his wounds. The figure of John is finely drawn, and the Child beautifully imagined. The identity of Mr. West's figures is so continually apparent, that I believe he has a few favourite domestics, who are the Saints and Demons of his necessities.

If it is not ludicrous, it is impious, that such a personification as this should be made public for vulgar contemplation. It is paying a posthumous obeisance to the artifices of wily priests in the darkest ages of Christianity. It must be extremely painful to the wise, to behold the Spirit of God portrayed as a dove, and even God himself occasionally as an imbecile old man! What transcends our comprehension, should not be wantonly supposed by folly. "There is a point which mortals cannot approach but in glimmering thought, it is that which borders on an intellectual image of the *universal Spirit*; the great *mind of the universe*; who, in the motions of a subtle fluid, suited to the visual organ, illuminates the world; who lives in the perfect action of substance; the purity of nature: How can we conceive of that which surpasses sense, but by means of what we know? How proceed to just inference, but by some clear rule of analogy?" Yet, in contempt of such awful conviction, will a callow Artist give to the most sacred mysteries,

"a local habitation and a name,"
and hold himself excused, because a Monk had originally dictated the presumption.

Mr. West has presented society with two Landscapes, which are equally false in design and execution: The arborial tints would form a new pattern for a Harlequin's jacket: They are unnatural, abrupt, and chaotic. Yet this may be judging them upon too broad a scale, as, from the mass of masonry in the foreground, the President might only intend to give us a *peep* at nature, and not a fair and unequivocal prospect. I know no utility for such pieces as these, but to hang them on the door posts of a *cabaret*, to signify it was the *Hole in the Wall*!

Mr. West is so fond of the *palpable sublime*, as to sacrifice every thing to that propensity. Hence his figures have the appearance of being drawn from marble originals, and not the delicate and nearly imperceptible beauties of the nudity. Men situated like Mr. West, should labour to become instances of perfection; and when they do not, we feel inclined to lament,
that

that the caprices of chance can counterbalance the influence of struggling excellence. Whoever administers patronage to insufficiency, becomes responsible in his character, (whatever may be his feelings,) for all that influx of pernicious predilection, which commonly is attendant on successful folly; and raises a horrid warfare in the young bosom, in which *what should be*, becomes obedient to *what is!* A lady of some celebrity has very pertinently observed, that "nothing great is to be expected from any set of Artists who are to give only copies of copies." Mr West has assuredly made very free with the antique, which is a laudable measure in the Disciple, but shews a paucity of thought in the Painter, who boldly ventures to exhibit his designs, as the appropriate workings of his own mind. In the picture of *Pylades and Orestes*, it is evident to the meanest virtuoso, that the *Antinous* in different positions, formed the model of the prominent heroes. This is a species of pilfering that does more credit to the industry than the talents of the professor. Of what significance would be the great and profound learning of Michael Angelo to any, if the Artist could be equally fortunate in acquiring reputation, without the proud accompaniments of a classic education? That idle man who can borrow his neighbour's drapery at pleasure, will not feel often inclined to fashion a suit for himself. That historic Artist who would be really estimable, must be unequivocally creative.

I think that Mr. West, possesses more of the mechanical or executive properties of the art, than that general and concomitant knowledge, and superior information, which should characterize those who *eagerly* desire to become exemplary in the vast pursuit: he has all that temperance of deportment, and resignation of manner, without which, no man can be successful in pushing his fortune within the regal circle of Windsor; he can be always tolerated because he never offends; and by fettering the energies of passion, he is permitted to receive the smiles of a king, as a counterbalance for the exercise of his own original dignity as a man. Why he has been so uniformly cherished, where his more polished and scientific predecessor was so unfortunately repelled has been to many a matter of surprise, though no event should be arranged as surprising, which is in any way dependant upon the caprices of hereditary power.

T. F.

T. F. RIGAUD, R. A.

No. 183. *The Exposing of Moses*

This is a most inexplicable daub, and will be chronicled as exposing the Artist, and not Moses—integrally or separately considered it has nothing to recommend it to our liking. The brown wench, whom he has with temerity introduced as Pharoah's lovely daughter, would not be tolerated in Hedge-lane; the young law-giver of the Israelites, reclines on a sort of drapery, which cannot be assimilated to linen, woollen, silk, sattin, or of Otaheite workmanship: his infant head, reclines on a bullock's kidney, and the vegetation of the puddle, on which he swims, gives me an idea of the flags of Acheron! Under what pretensions, or through what manoeuvring, this gentleman became an R. A. I know not, but in my honest opinion, he can neither conceive, draw, or execute with precision.

I am informed that Mr. Rigaud, keeps a garrulous parrot, I think it would not be *mal à propos* if it was taught the following ditty. A knowledge of the tune would be less difficult to acquire than the origin and insertion of the muscles.

Master Rigaud, study well myology;

Master Rigaud, study osteology—

Master Rigaud, drop these *rigs* so comical;

Why sure your brain is crack'd, by studies astronomical,

Bow, wow, wow;

Falderiddy, talderiddy, Bow, wow, wow.

Our English painters, are either so feeble, or so unambitious, that when they get to the *half-way house* they sit themselves down as blissful as if they had got to the end of their journey; it belongs to Satire to whip them from this state of degrading indolence, and goad them to walk on. The sudden fore-shortning of an animal, which was so congenial and familiar to the bold though perfect genius of Rubens, would appal the history painters of this æra, nor do I know any in Europe, who could with a well founded confidence, attempt such an energetic toil, but Monsieur David, of Paris; and though he can delineate the anatomy with the most enviable correctness, I have some doubts, if even he could effect it with a necessary enthusiasm, and an accordant fidelity.

JOHN RUSSEL, R. A.

No. 142. *A Boy blowing Bubbles*

This academician's performances are ever of that *mediocre* sort, as neither to entitle him to high approbation or severe
censure

censure: he is chiefly confined to heads, where nothing of the God is required to enable the labourer to pass muster. Crayon painting at best, is but an unworthy pursuit, and in the prosecution of which a vigorous mind would feel impatient and disdainful. This picture is said to be intended as a present from Mr. Pitt, to a certain babbling Etonian, as a frail memorial of his blessed conversion from the heresies of infectious liberty.

No. 58. *A Portrait of Hart, the Herbalist, by the same Artist.*

Equally tame, spiritless, smooth, and unimportant. Mr. Russet's attempt to make the beard predominate, has been rather unhappy, as it gives the idea of a human chin larded with the fat of bacon.

T. GOOCH.

No. 47. *A Curricule Horse.*

This is a portrait of a favourite horse belonging to Lord Seston, and if the resemblance is perfect, I have to marvel at his being so highly prized. The portrait of the coachman has more truth; there are various other exertions by this artist, but none that do him more credit.

G. FARINGTON, R. A.

No. 71. *A view in the High-Street, Oxford.*

This picture is very ably managed, and very little inferior to the best efforts of Canaletti! the tone of colouring is finely, yet not laboriously handled.

No. 90. *A view of Warwick Castle, by the same Author.*

This is not equally beautiful with the other performances. I do not think he was judicious in the choice of his view: the water is too bald and glassy, and the trees not exactly as the Creator meant.

GEORGE MORLAND.

No. 52. *Bargaining for Sheep.*

No. 169. *Interior of a Stable.*

No. 186. *A Farrier's Shop.*

All these pictures have the same merits and the same tendencies: they are replete with spirit and nature, but have not their due effect, from the want of subordination in the colour-

C

ing

mediocre
or severe
censure

ing and a neglect in the artist, to copy the *minutiae* of his objects.

It may be said of Mr. Moreland, as a painter, what Mr. Dignum, so happily said of Mr. Incledon, as a vocal performer, that the Almighty has taken more pains with him than any other man: yet he must not consider this literally as an encomium, but only as declaratory of a blessing, that he peculiarly possesses, which, if not sustained by studious perseverance will only be recorded as a drawback upon his general reputation.

It has been the misfortune of this rare artist, in his short progress hitherto in life, to become the dupe and instrument of designing men, who have vulgarised his mind, and made his brilliant talents subservient to their own particular purposes, and not his advantage.

I think the creative mind of this young artist, has been suffered to run wild, and though the soil is uncommonly rich, the culture of the produce has been neglected; it has given nourishment to many flowers and many weeds. I do not believe that Mr. Morland has any proper ideas of beauty; his necessities urge him to instantaneous action, and he catches at Nature when she is in a dishabille, but seldom or never paid his devoirs when she was elegantly attractive. I think the better part of his powers lie dormant, from the want of legitimate pride, and it is now probable that they ever may: he is palpably deficient in knowledge of the subordination of tints, and the union of colours, and seems to gather his laurels so carelessly and thanklessly, that it is a doubt with me, if he would not be as happy in the society of a ploughboy as the *Caracci*!

None of our young artists seem to have sufficient fortitude to look distress boldly in the face, and dash through all the incumbrances and inconveniences attendant on a probationary state of poverty, to acquire indelible renown, and rewards merely sanctified; to effect those great purposes, they should feel like *Rafaele*, a divine glow of boundless hope: an enthusiasm disdainful of any restraint that fortune can enforce, but alas, they have none of this indispensable energy: they are contented to vegetate like vulgar handicraftsmen, and glide through their being in a middle sky, when they should all be *Icari*, and struggle to survey the sun!

S. WRIGHT,

S. WRIGHT, Derby.

No. 107. *An Eruption of Vesuvius.*No. 232. *A Lake at Dunkeld, in Scotland. Evening, by the same Author.*No. 233. *A Village on Fire, by ditto.*

This truly celebrated Artist has honored the Institution, by condescending to mingle his choice labours with the *Harp Alley* excellence of a majority of the Royal Academicians. Feeling their importance so inordinately, it moves my wonder that these uplifted gentlemen do not eagerly contribute, by their own efforts, to the support of that order from whence they derive such prodigious importance, and not give the cavilling world occasion to remark, that they have been honored without desert, and retain the mummeries of the institution without gratitude. When I was in Paris, in 1787, they managed those affairs much better: the Royal Academy of Polite Arts there was conducted more nobly: every person was admitted to view *gratis*, what was meant as a free display of national genius, for national admiration. With us the motive seems cupidity, and the end deception. With the richest Monarch in Europe for their patron, the arts of England are literally kept from destruction by the votive shillings of a motley public, who pay the salaries of the professors, and find oil for the lamps in the *plaster* and *living* schools, though the King arrogates the character of being the high supporter of the system. But it is a provident assumption of dignity, unaccompanied with either risk, anxiety, or expence! He seems to possess the *furor* of patronage as highly as the tenth Leo, but I have as yet to learn that he is equally munificent.

SIR FRANCIS BOURGEOIS, R. A.

No. 210. *Sans Culottes taken Prisoners by a Detachment of the Prince of Wales's Light Dragoons.*

This insignificant and accommodating Chevalier has seized a subject, that he might pay his lowly court to power, at the expence of truth and the national character. British soldiers are not in the habit of loading a conquered enemy with chains.

No. 204. *Children at their Mother's Grave, by the same Author.*

A groupe of ill drawn children, scratching up the sod with their nails. In this attempt he has certainly aimed to surprize

s, by being comical upon a *grave* subject! This, like all his works, strikes me as a mongrel production, involving in its effects all the bad parts of Berghem and Louthembourg. If his intent is to be singular, that aim he has accomplished with puerile industry.

It is on record, that a Horse was made a Consul; that an Old Woman was chosen Pope; and that a Pig taught Greek; then let our wonder cease, that this amiable Knight of the Polar Star was *made* (I am ashamed to say elected) a Royal Academician. I have heard much about the doctrine of colours, and have studied the subject myself; but this eccentric Painter seems to consider the theme as nugatory, and, contrary to ancient and modern prejudice, makes the hue of *brick-dust* the primary tint, whether he is portraying an angel or a demon, or the ocean or the dry land. This surprisingly modest gentleman has taken especial care, in the distribution of the paintings in the present Exhibition, that if you turn to any point of the compass, some divine effusion from his pencil shall cheer the vagrant eye.

This incongruous sprig of honor, and his coadjutor Mr. Smirke, seem to have paid more attention to the *frames* than the *canvas*. It is curious to behold their œconomy in arranging the decorative carvings round the rooms: they appear as having zealously laboured to be mathematically just. Such minor considerations in such an establishment, make the judicious smile. It is sacrificing nobleness to nothingness. I think if St. Luke could pay them an opportune visit, he might feel inclined, in the overflowings of his rage, to hang up the Committee, instead of the pictures.

WILLIAM REDMORE BIGG, A.

No. 133. *Birth-day present to an Old Nurse.*

Of all the junior Artists, Mr. Bigg appears to be the most on a level with himself. What he is now he was ten years ago, and will be ten years hence; that is, such a delineator of domestic life, as would satisfy a common, but not an ambitious mind.

Every science is dependent for support upon concomitant sciences; and to know but a little, and be content with that paucity, in any liberal art we may profess to cultivate, it were better not to know any thing. Any professor who is satisfied with accomplishing half measures, is a being with half a soul, and unfit to associate, even in idea, with those divine spirits,
who

who have exalted our nature with their endowments, and amended and refined it by their example.

WILLIAM BEECHEY, A. Portrait Painter to Her Majesty.

No. 127. *Portrait of Mrs. Siddons, with the Emblems of Tragedy.*

This performance does not correspond with some efforts I have heretofore seen from the same pencil. The figure is not accurately designed, and the attitude is affectedly disgusting. It conveys the semblance of a gypsy in fatten, disporting at a masquerade, rather than the murder-loving Melpomene. As a portrait, the figure is too thin for the original; and as a picture, it is too imperfect to be valuable to a connoisseur.

Mr. Beechey has this year most unaccountably fallen off from himself. His pictures are neither so rich, so graceful, or so true, as they were the last year. He has suffered Mr Hoppner to supersede him, which is a sufferance that took place while his genius was tipsy, and his enemies vigilant.

He has eight other pictures, none of which operate as supremely creditable to his name but No. 22, which is a portrait of a Clergyman, in his academical dress. This is a fair, clear, unsophisticated portrait. We have but three decided portrait painters in the kingdom, which are, Romney, Shee, and Beechey; the rest are diseased with all Sir Joshua Reynolds's worst habits!

I have known many Artists infected with what I shall denominate the *rage of Chymistry*, who have almost wholly neglected the rage of truth. They have been violent in their desires to attain a subordinate knowledge, and left the great primary cause of pictorial beauty unexplored. Like a military Tyro, who mistook the order and design of tactics, and wasted his hours in the study of pop-guns, whose fate it might be in future to besiege an Empire!

The blazing existence of Sir Joshua Reynolds has proved very injurious to the *pictorial fry*, as his merit was manifested in the gracefulness of his fancy, which no study can attain; and not in the handling or mechanical parts of the art, which the assiduous may acquire, and which even in him was slovenly and bad. Hence has arisen the common lunacy of copying with eagerness what was in him a deformity, and leaving the *sublimities* behind, which alone conferred worth on his productions! American Stuart was the only disciple of his time who surveyed his artifices with disdain.

EDMUND

EDMUND GARVEY, R. A.

No. 103. *A View of Rome.*

Another Royal Academician, whose qualifications are, if possible, more doubtful than any of his compeers! As the best application of strength is sleight, so the best application of knowledge is utility. And if a man cannot make every the squeezings of his brain subservient to the pleasure or good of others, I think he need not be very solicitous about requiring the opinions of futurity from the Sybil's leaf.

J. W. ABBOT, Esq. Honorary.

No. 64. *Landscape and Cattle.*

This Landscape, taken in all its component parts, I do not hesitate to pronounce *the very best in the Exhibition.* The repose and harmony is beautifully conducted: the cattle are nearly as good as Cuyp; and the herbage and water so correctly pencilled, that imagination tempts the admirer to disturb the order of the first by his breath, and the latter by a pebble. Look at this ye Garvey's of the Royal Institution, and blush yourselves into contrition and sorrow.

S. DE WILDE.

No. 124. *A Scene in the Children in the Wood.*

This piece involves the portraits of the younger Bannister, Mrs. Booth, and Mrs. Bland. The assumption of feeling has so worked upon the muscles of this favourite son of Thalia, as to give him in the *contour* a resemblance to the immortal Garrick. In opposition to the dictates of gallantry, the Ladies are sacrificed, to give interest to the gentleman. This is one of the best things of the kind I have seen since Zoffani laid down the pencil. I wish Mr. De Wilde was more attentive to the accompaniments.

J. IBBETSON.

No. 28. *Distant View of Anglesea, with the Pass round the bottom of Penmacnmawr.*

When many of our present race of Landscape painters wish to make *a study*, they do it by their fire-sides: they take an old perished picture of Wynants, Ruysdale, or Hobbima, or a damaged copy from some eminent Artist, and *compose*—by steal-
ing

ing a tree from one, a dock-leaf from another, and a water-fall from a third. By this means we have Flemish landscapes, peopled with English figures, and the same unvaried scenes served up *ad infinitum*. Very different is the conduct of Mr. Ibbetson. His views are taken from nature; and in his pictures we see our own country as in a mirror, painted in a style peculiarly his own. This is a very faithful portrait of the place delineated, and pencilled in a masterly manner.

H. SINGLETON.

No. 106. *Æneas protecting the Body of Pandarus*

I wish Mr. Singleton would guard against a French style of painting. The shield of Æneas, a soldier of *these degenerate* days could not lift. It is too undetermined.

O. HUMPHRY.

No. 109. *Portrait of an Armenian Slipper-man.*

Dr. Johnson once observed, that the man who could outstrip his cotemporaries with his face towards the West, would preserve his superiority if he turned his face to the East. I regretted Mr. Humphry's having quitted the painting of miniatures; but his manner of treating crayons gives a force which I never before saw, except in *Rosalba*, united with a delicacy that is peculiarly his own.

Signora ANNA TONELLI.

No. 348. *Ariadne.*

This is the portrait of the Duchess of Caserta, an Italian lady of high rank, who being said to resemble this bust, assumed the character at a masquerade in Italy. The head-dress is eminently graceful; but, though coloured, it retains something of the marble.

R. FREEBAIRN.

No. 81. *The Fountain of Egeria near Rome.*

No. 75. *Subterraneous Ruins of Mæcænus's Villa at Tivoli.*

I have seen few specimens of the art of perspective more perfect than these. The keeping of the tints in these artificial caverns is admirable, the water is so ably touched, and the accompaniments so skilful, that a contemplation of the pictures would

would make me imagine myself cold, during the pressure of a sultry meridian. The Artist has introduced a few figures in Roman habits, which cannot be compared in the same scale of fitness.

H. P. DANLOUX.

No. 206. *Portrait of a Lady.*

This is a buxom matron, of a most resistless mein. The Artist has at least made her tread with much firmness, if not with much grace.

M. BROWN.

No. 242. *Portrait of a Gentleman.*

I have no doubt but if Lavater was to meet this gentleman, he would loudly pronounce him as an honest fellow, and a lineal descendant from Silenus. The jolly God had few priests more rubicund. If a hoghead of wine had sensibility, the leer of his eye would make it tremble to the very lees! As a painting, I cannot urge much in its favour; and it is filthily be-plastered with a varnish, which will inevitably crack in all directions. I have seen abler efforts from the same pencil.

N. DANCE ESQ. *Honorary.*

No. 161. *A Landscape.*

When we look at a picture by Claude Lorraine, the enchanting warmth of his tints, and beauty of his scenery, almost invariably excite a wish that the picture could be changed to reality, and we could become inhabitants of the Elysium, that he represents in colours so fascinating.—Very different are the ideas excited by Mr. Dance's picture. It must be acknowledged to be nature, and perhaps strictly and peculiarly English nature; but there runs through the whole a coldness—a comfortless coldness, that chills the soul.

This landscape appears to have been taken at the first confirmation of summer, when the vernal tint is more general than when the season is more advanced, as then the peevish East, and the breezes fraught with innumerable and undefined animalculæ discolour and contract the foliage, and partially wither the brightest honors of the grove.—This view appears to have been designed immediately after the hamlet had been washed by a copious shower, which gives it an air of *coldness* that is uncongenial with our wishes, though it is truly natural. It has been the custom of European artists,
from

from the days of Claude to this period, to make their pictures in the autumnal season, that they might avail themselves of the advantages of that variety of hues, which the approaches of death, spreads over decaying animation; for it is my decided opinion, that all plants have their powers of sympathy and sensation, and shrink at the commencement of a blight, as much as village hinds, on the ascertainment of an attorney! The water in the distance, is touched in, in a slovenly manner, and looks more like a plate of glass half ground; the shepherd is well drawn, but the legs of the sheep are thick enough for so many oxen.

A. PETHER.

No. 15. *Evening.*

This landscape, is, on the whole, very agreeable, it is a lively representation of nature, in her most becoming tints; the clear obscure is ably managed, the ærial perspective well understood, and the subordination of the tints of the back ground delicately mellowed into the horizon—it is in the style of *Both*.

No. 303. *Evening, a scene from Nature, by the same Author.*

The distances in this picture are very finely wrought, but he is not equally fortunate in the fore-ground; the boat upon the water, is not buoyant, and the broad herbage I apprehend would be considered as uncognizable, by Linnæus.

J. T. SERRES.

No. 308. *A Frigate in a hard gale off the Eddystone.*

This nautical morsel possesses but little of the supreme taste and knowledge of the artist's deceased father: there is an outline of hardness to the water, which those who study deeply could never perceive; they are as determined as the Glacieres of Savoy. If this gentleman would condescend to copy one of the fine pictures, by Vandevelde, I am persuaded he would forego his turgidity of finishing.

N. POCOCK.

No. 267. *Captain Jones, in his Majesty's Packet, Chesterfield, rescuing the crew of a ship that was then sinking.*

There were three positions, which puzzled exceedingly the fourth Henry of France; and those were, to know in what

D

re-

religion he should die: whether Queen Elizabeth of England, was chaste, and if the Prince of Orange had any courage. My solicitude at present is more limited, it is chiefly confined to the supposition by what means this gentleman could be self-persuaded to become an artist.

S. GILPIN.

No. 227. *A Gentleman on horseback, bringing up lag hounds to the cover; the portrait by Mr. Reinagle.*

This is the prime picture in the exhibition of its kind. Mr. Gilpin is inferior to Mr. Stubbs, in anatomical knowledge, but is superior to him in grace and genius. The human portrait is not disreputably finished.

I. L. MOSNIER, R. A. (*A foreign Academician.*)

No. 560. *A Portrait of a Lady.*

There is a labour evident through the whole of this picture, which is ineffectual; it is highly finished but *hard*, and gaudy, but not *free*; it conveys all the worst characteristics of the *French school*, and does more honor to the industry, than the more noble capabilities of the artist; the finishing is superfluously particular. This I conceive to be the most perfect of several other portraits by the same author.

There is a firmness and permanency in the colouring of Mr. Mosnier, which I earnestly recommend to many of our modern portrait painters to imitate, and not the perishable varnish deceptions, which, from motives of indolence and ignorance, they so eagerly adopt. The late Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted the present Marquis of Drogheda; when a young man, he left this country and went upon his travels, and at his return to his seat at Monstereven in Ireland, where the picture had been conveyed, he found to his surprize, that during a period of twenty years, the painting had most wonderfully kept pace with his own health, and from some powers of sympathy, communicated by the artist, had become brown, exactly in proportion as the peer became bilious from malady. All this seeming miracle was effected through the medium of flying varnishes! this anecdote I had from his lordship, when on a visit in Ireland.

Painters of family pictures, where there are a number of young children, who change like the passing cloud, and writers of that species of poetry which is made up of compliments for conquests, the effects of which are liable to be done away, before the ink is dry; are much to be pitied. When, many years ago, Mr. Zoffanii, the painter, began his family picture
of

of the present Royal family, there were ten children : he made his sketch accordingly, and attending two or three times, went on with finishing the figures. Sundry circumstances prevented his being able to proceed. His Majesty was engaged in business of more consequence ; her majesty was engaged ; some of the princesses were engaged, and some of the princes were ill ; the completion of the picture was consequently delayed,—when a message came to the artist, that another prince was born, and must be introduced into the picture. This was not easy,—but with some difficulty it was done ;—all this took up much time,—when a second message came, informing him of the birth of a princess, and that the little illustrious stranger must have a place on the canvas. This was impossible without a new arrangement ; one half of the figures were therefore obliged to be obliterated, and put closer together, to make room. To do this was the business of some months, and before the completion a letter came from one of the Maids of Honor, informing the painter there was another addition to the family, for whom a place must be found.—“ This,” cried the artist, “ *is too much*,—if they cannot fit with more regularity,—I cannot paint with more expedition, and must give “ it up.”

Sir GEORGE BEAUMONT, Bart. *Honorary.*

No. 126. *A Landscape.*

Had I not been previously gratified with Mr. Abbot's extraordinary performance, I should have been inclined to hang with more pleasure upon this very respectable trial of skill. I would recommend it to Sir George Beaumont to study Waterloo, who is a fine master to lead a student into a simple and proper choice of nature ; in which I think this gentleman is more deficient than in his handling. The tree in the foreground is overbearing ; too intrusive, and not beautiful in its ramifications ! It forms an arch with its branches, which destroys the indispensable conviction, that the growth has been spontaneous ! The distance is managed with a better effect, and the whole deserving praise. I congratulate society upon these testimonies of laudable endeavour, which prove, that amidst that ocean of contamination, which sullies and wrecks so many of our flimsy sprigs of distinction, a few of both sexes are discoverable, who have the hardihood to prefer the consolations arising from invigorating study, to the succeeding abominations of what is termed a life of fashion.

D 2

Nothing

Nothing proves the imperfectness of our optical organization so clearly, as the conviction, that all Artists view nature differently ; and yet I believe none view her accurately. The beauty and intricacy of her works are beyond our powers of conception and delineation ; and we only attempt to copy what is in its loveliness inimitable : But I will not be diffusive on this theme, lest I should check that ardour which is so necessary to the purposes of social improvement.

P. REINAGLE, A.

No. 167. *Essex County Hall, with a View of part of Chelmsford.*

This view is not wanting in general merit. The perspective is accurately just ; but, considered as a whole, it is not entitled to take the lead in representations of this tendency. This Artist is more minute than Mr. Farington, but has not his majesty of thought. Perhaps I should think better of his picture, if the blue sky was less daring and offensive.

RICHARD WESTALL, R. A. Elect.

No. 16. *A Portrait of a young Gentleman.*

This effort is as puerile as the subject.

No. 111. *Portrait of an Artist.*

This is a resemblance of the Artist's own delectable self. It is said to be a coarse and unfavourable likeness. At any rate, the picture is not eminently favourable to his professional character. I expected that the introductory testimonies would be more perfect, that were to affix the seal upon his diplomatic character.

No. 113. *A View near London. A Sketch.*

If the timely modesty implied in the word Sketch, had not operated to my comfort, I should have been sick of this monstrous instance of affectation. The only visible object to fix the attention, is the cupola of St. Paul's, which looks like a pepper box in a smoky chimney.

No. 198. *Minerva, painted for the Council Chamber of the City of London.*

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us." Under what baneful impulse could this young man be induced to make this gigantic

gigantic attempt? The radix of true conception is not as yet innixed in the soil of his young imagination:

*Nondum struxit Hugo, vix fundamenta locavit,
Det Deus ut possit dicere struxit Hugo?*

This lady I do affirm does not beam a divinity: she is all legs and thighs, like the late Sir Thomas Robinson. The drawing of the foot, would disgrace a school-boy, and the folds of her drapery, are all unascertained and dashed in at random; she is evidently either pregnant or padded, and seems prouder of her *belly* than her *head*, but this perhaps was a discreet compliment to city prejudices. To be brief, it is a brazen, forward minx, unknown to Jove, to Prometheus, and *Alma Mater*: the goddess it may be presumed, is so offended, that she will have no influence whatever in Mr. Westall's affairs, much less bear him to heaven upon her shield, that he might steal some necessary fire.

As I believe there are none living who are gifted or illuminated with that supreme capacity, which will enable a professor of painting to be a received arbiter of the complex art, it should not excite astonishment, that I am apparently severe towards Mr. Westall, of whose genius I do not think cheaply; he has capability, but it wants pruning and melioration; he has been precipitated to the command of a fleet, before he well knew the principles of navigation! Hence the wildness and uncertainty of his movements—there may be licentiousness of manner in painting, as destructive to the necessary fame of genius, as licentiousness of manners on a moral scale, would be to the required reputation of a member of the social system; each may be partially respected, even under this drawback upon propriety, but neither can be uniformly esteemed, without a rigorous observance of every prescribed duty annexed to the situation.

As the *graces* of refined nature, are recorded to have been most impressive from beauty in distress, and *greatness* from such memorable events as Seneca expiring, it should be the invariable task of our ripening artists, to compare their own ideas upon such governing subjects, with the compositions of the most perfect masters of the foreign schools; and though denied a reference to Apelles, Protogenes, Parrhasius, and Zeuxis, there are some most excellent examples extant. But it must be recollected that they are to be only *studied* not *copied*! Michael Angelo, is a fine roman dish of roast beef, from which our affected branches of Saint Luke, never fail to cut and come again; but the unfortunate issue of the toil is, that they

they only adopt his wildnesses and incongruities, and leave his divine graces as the cock left the gem, untouched, because they are unable to estimate their value! Goltzius, would be as true an original for such minds: There are few things more diverting to me, than to see some of our modern artists attempt the embodying of an Allegory, they imagine the idea is complete, where they make Virtue in a clean smock; Jove with an indented forehead; Vulcan as a drunken blacksmith; and Mars bedaubed with red oker!

The general reliance upon the force of *puffing* in the newspapers of the metropolis, among our little artists, as well as our little authors, is indicative of feebleness in both, and ought to be much regretted, as the system is now so methodically pursued, that the application of a few guineas to paragraph writers, will make any wretched dolt conspicuous for talents which he does *not* possess, while the man of real ability is almost unknown, as he disdains to feed this abominable source of corruption and ruinous falsehood. Truth and Virtue have scarcely any support whatever, in our periodical publications!

R. FREEBAIRN.

No. 264. *An ancient Roman Bridge over the Arno, the ruins of the villa of Mæcenas, in the distance.*

I shall make no apology for the introduction of this gentleman's name a second time, in this imperfect stricture. I am induced to the measure by a grateful impulse of acquired satisfaction; this classical essay is of that sort which steals imperceptibly into the embraces of sober judgment: there is a serenity and calmness in this deserving artist's performances, which in a degree dignifies my nature; the sight of them makes me pensive and reconciled to the ruin which occurs around me, unheeded by the frivolous and the unthinking; they are tranquil scenes which press gently and almost holily upon my understanding; like the finest Compositions in sacred musick! they might tend to harmonise the chords of a perturbed spirit; and I surely ought to acknowledge myself obliged to him, who can steal me so harmlessly and smoothly from a recollection of mortal woes.

I am anxiously willing to aid that lever, which should lift dissident ability into the mart of public munificence, and give him a fair opportunity to be noticed and honored. My antipathies are only excited by the bold irruptions of saucy Inanity and unauthorised claimants upon social respect.

MAR-

— MARLOW.

No. 248. *View of part of the City of Lyons, with the old castle of Pierre Encise.*

I have heretofore been induced to think reputably of Mr. Marlow : but as there is a *bathos* in poetry, so I perceive there may be a sinking or declension in painting ; to speak justly, this performance degrades his name : it is infinitely worse than any thing I ever saw before from the same origin, and is untrue, unqualified, confused in its effect, and muddy in the manner.

G. GARRARD.

No. 91. *Portraits of Mares and Foals.*

An undecipherable falling off from his earlier exertions : this opinion should be inspiriting and not dispiriting to Mr. Garrard, as he really may approach to excellence if he can resolve to do so, and will act up to the tenor of the resolution.

No man, but particularly an Artist, should suffer any day to conclude, without the performance of such obligatory duties as may, upon reflection, reconcile the man to himself : our time is so limited, and our faculties so imperfect, that the utmost of all sublunary endeavours must fall infinitely short of perfection ; and as this truth is self-evident from all that is, or has been, how much like a lunatic does he appear, who suffers his indolence to circumvent both the essence of his knowledge and the entreaty of his necessities ?

THOMAS LAWRENCE, R. A. Elect. *Principal Painter in ordinary to his Majesty.*

No. 78. *A Portrait of a Gentleman.*

This is a likeness of Sir Gilbert Elliot : as this portrait is not finished, I shall forbear to investigate its merits or demerits.

No. 115. *Portrait of an Archbishop.*

This is a likeness of the spiritual lord of Canterbury ; it conveys a full idea of the florid, well-fed visage of this fortunate arch-prelate ; and a monk better appointed never sighed before the tomb of Becket.

No.

No. 131. *Portrait of a nobleman.*

This is a likeness of Lord Auckland, a man to whom the capricious Goddess has been equally bountiful: this heterogeneous nobleman is so fantastically enveloped in drapery, that I cannot ascertain what is meant for his coat, and what for the curtain—they are all of the same strength and importance: this is destroying the subordination of objects most completely. Perhaps his Lordship is portrayed in the very act of writing his glorious manifesto at the Hague, as he appears to think so intensely on the theme, that his eye-balls seem bursting from their spheres!

No. 173. *Portrait of a Lady of Quality.*

This is a whole length of Lady Emily Hobart, in the character of Juno: the face is chalky and sickly; the robe is so white, and so unincumbered with shadow, that it might pass for an habiliment of Porcelain texture: while I viewed it, I was betrayed from a recollection of the surrounding objects, and momentarily imagined, that if I cast a stone at the vestment I should shiver it to pieces.

No. 181. *Portrait of a Gentleman.*

This I understand is the likeness of a Mr. Knight, and is repulsive in the attitude: it fills me with the idea of an irascible pedagogue explaining Euclid to a dunce!

Mr. Lawrence began his professional career upon a false and delusive principle. His portraits were delicate but not true, and attractive but not admirable—and because he met the approbation of a few fashionable spinsters (which, it must be admitted, is a sort of inticement very intoxicating to a young mind) vainly imagined that his labors were perfect—his fertile mind is overrun with weeds—appearing to do well to a few, may operate to our advantage in morals, but will not as applicable to the exertion of professional talents: many have caught a transitory fame from the ravings of ideotism, but none have retained celebrity but those who have passed through the fiery ordeal of general judgment—There appears to be a total revolution in all the accustomed obligations of our being: men can do as well, and be as much respected now, after the forfeiture of character, as before; and Artists seem to think, that they can paint as well, and be as much encouraged, without a knowledge of the common elements of their profession,

fession, as with it! This is surely the Saturnalia of vice and insignificance.

D. PELLEGRINI.

No. 79. *A Bacchante.*

This is an indelicate and meretricious performance, and can only be pleasing to tottering voluptuaries: the drapery is bad, and the whole appearance of this wanton inmate of Comus, justifies the axiom, that

“Vice to be hated, needs but to be seen.”

one might believe that a great portion of those painters who have exhibited this year were in the pay of the decrepid Earl, to force his senses to the allurements of indecency, as to do them justice, I never saw a finer shew of naked bosoms and *all that!!!*

W. MILLER.

No. 101. *Portrait of a Physician of the University of Cambridge.*

A firm, faithful picture, executed obedient to some of the best principles of the art.

I know not from what particular cause it proceeds, but this gentleman's name has never been strengthened by a due portion of fame: the reason I must presume is, that he is not in habits of intimacy, or, more truly speaking, *intrigue*, with those embrazened blockheads, who now scribble upon the theme. To speak plainly, we have scarce any person now, who descants or writes upon the *Fine Arts*, but those who know little or nothing about the subject! Hence are our periodical works filled with absurd and destructive criticisms.—I very much admire the noble ingenuousness of Dr. Moore, who, in his “View of Society and Manners,” very modestly expresses himself thus: “Conscious of my ignorance in the mysteries of “connoisseurship, I say nothing of the pictures;” speaking of the Gallery at Wolfenbottle—It is not in a small degree disgraceful to the Artists, and disadvantageous to the pursuit, that almost all our pictorial treatises in this country, are written by persons whose qualifications did not square with their ambition: it is, in my opinion, truly necessary for all professional men to resist this improper interference as much as possible, inasmuch as the national character suffers among fo-

E

reigners,

reigners, on the great points of taste and judgment, from the perusal of such works, either in the original, or through the medium of a translation.

It is not many months since a vain-glorious Divine published, in quarto, the first volume of, what he called, a *History of the Arts*, with a promise of two succeeding volumes at a future period. The book was dedicated to the King, and therefore purchased by the Royal Academy; but as it appeared that, in the course of the volume, there were many compliments paid to one Artist, and no notice taken of the rest, the majority of the Painters thought that this *neglect* was abuse by *inuendo*:—they determined to cast a stigma on the book, and throw it out of the Somerset-house Library. For this purpose an Artist, from whose work a late popular print has been engraved, made a motion to the following effect: "That, as the Royal Academicians had been induced to purchase a book relative to the Arts, which book was unworthy of a place in the Academical Library, the said book should be removed from the shelves, with marks of degradation and disgrace." This was debated for some time with great warmth, until one Gentleman, wishing to end the disputation, suggested, that before they threw this kind of unprecedented obloquy on the volume, it would not be amiss for them to *read it*. To so reasonable a proposition no man could object, and the further consideration of the motion was put off until the next public meeting, which happened to be for the purpose of electing three Royal Academicians. Most of the Members were present, and debates ran high, some of the writer's friends asserting that the Royal Academy *had no right* to throw out the book, because the King had bought it. This produced a question, With whose money? And being put to the vote, ten held up their hands for its being retained, and five for its being discarded. This was objected to as an irregular mode of proceeding, because many of the Members being otherwise engaged, had not held up their hands at all; and it was therefore proposed it should be balloted, but the ballot was over-ruled, and the first vote remains on the books:—this, it must be admitted, was a most ridiculous squabble about a performance, which must be approved the more the less it is understood.

JOHN HOPPNER, A. *Portrait Painter to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.*

No. 36. *Portrait of a Lady of Quality.*

This is a spirited likeness of Lady Caroline Capel: the drapery is fancifully displayed; the dog in the foreground is

is ill-drawn, the child incorrect, and the whole assemblage seem frightened!

No. 155. *Portrait of a Lady.*

This is a very charming picture of Mrs. Parkyns, and does much credit to the Artist.

No. 191. *A Gale of Wind, by the same Artist.*

This is a slight but meritorious performance. The spray of the sea is better depicted than any other similar attempt I have lately seen, and though many degrees behind *Backhuysen*, may nevertheless claim attention, and some praise. To be very estimable as a marine painter, it is incumbent on the professor to do what *Backhuysen* did, that is, to go to sea in a tempest, sketch the billows in the very zenith of their convulsion, and embody and harmonize the whole when the storm has ceased, and taste can regulate reflection.

Historical Painting has been very properly arranged as the more sublime and difficult province of the arts, and as it may be conducted by professors of rare ability to answer the noblest purposes of our nature, its encouragement should be proportioned to its uses. Of all the polished nations of which we have received any account, there never were any, where the personal vanity of the inhabitants, was so ludicrously apparent as in these realms; here all human beings of all classes wish to possess their own vile portraiture for momentary adoration, and seem almost wholly regardless of any other production of the Arts, which should involve a general interest, as being generally applicable to some extraordinary event, as dear to the popular memory as contemplation: it is owing to this destructive impulse that our annual Exhibitions are crowded, tier over tier, with the repulsive resemblances of filken peers, fat drivellers, silly ugliness, and simpering dowagers, and so restricted a portion of the encumbered walls allotted, to the cheering emanations of superior genius.

FRANCIS WHEATLY, R. A.

No. 122. *Spring.* No. 187. *Winter.*

Whenever Mr. Wheatley presents us with a rural Nymph whom he wishes to be peculiarly impressive, he decorates her head with a profusion of party coloured ribbands, like a maniac in Coventry, which play in the breeze, offensive to thought and propriety. As this is not the character of our village

Daphnes, why make them so prodigiously fine at the expence of truth? The ornaments of a pretty woman of rank cannot be too simple; and the best excuse that can be offered for their blazing gewgaws, is, that such unwholesome vanity gives bread to the Artizan, while they raise a smile on the cheek of philosophy.

Our Artists have been fascinated with ideas in perspective, that only allure to deceive; they are bewitched with the consequence without paying due respect to the cause: and because they have read that Vandyke was accoutred in silk and fatten, believe that it is every man's desert, who professes the Arts, to be sumptuous in his raiment, without duly considering that Vandyke studied, without intermission, for years, to acquire that pre-eminence in the scale of society, which, even when acquired, but imperfectly warrants such exhibitions of ruinous arrogance.

T. PHILLIPS.

No. 11. *Cupid disarmed by Euphrosyne.*

The head of Euphrosyne is not unlike Angelica. There is something in this essay that proves the Artist may be better when he will.

C. F. DE BREDÁ.

No. 68. *Portrait of a Swedish Nobleman in the national dress.*

This is between the extremes of "good and bad imagination!"

No. 88. *Portrait of a Lady of Quality.*

The Queen of Grief.

L. J. COSSE.

No. 271. *Genius illuminating the World.*

This surprizing attempt makes me recollect Bonnel Thornton's exhibition some years since, where a poor genius was represented, as making his way through the world without breeches!

W. ARTAUD.

No. 315. *Portrait of a Philosopher.*

This is an accurate likeness of Dr. Priestley. Every Briton should blush when he surveys the portraiture of this great man!

MINIATURES.

MINIATURES.

G. A. Keman.

No. 453. *Horatius entering Rome, &c. &c. and four Portraits.*

These pictures are, in the aggregate well painted and productive of a good effect.

I. Kirk.

No. 454. *Love tormenting the Soul.*

No. 479. *A frame with Miniatures, fancy.*

The drawing of these is good and they are well painted. I am surprised that this artist should go from large to Miniature painting; I think it was quitting the higher for the lower department.

R. Collins.

No. 460. *Portrait of Mr. Wilson, the manager of the European Museum.*

This is extremely like the original, and a tolerable picture.

S. Shelly.

No. 466. *Twelve Portraits.*

These portraits speaking generally, are not so well as I have seen of this artist; but his historical morsel of Youth and Beauty (No. 386) does him honor; it is unquestionably the best similar attempt in the multifarious collection; it combines some of the best properties of the art, and proves that the artist has an inquisitive and comprehensive mind.

H. Bone.

No. 473. *Portrait of an Artist, in Enamel.*

No. 474. *Ditto in Enamel.*

These are executed in a poor, purply and cadaverous style, and the effect is very bad. The portrait of a nobleman, by
this

this artist, No. 534, is in water colours, and more ably managed.

No. 546. *A Sleeping girl in Enamel, by the same Artist.*

This is a copy from a very good picture, by the late Sir Joshua Reynolds, and is altogether, the best picture in enamel I have seen of this artist, and the best picture in enamel in the room: the effect is bold and the style so much superior to his other efforts, that I can with difficulty reconcile it to myself, that they are all the offspring of the same imagination.

R. Higgs.

No. 496. *Portrait of a Nobleman, in Enamel.*

A very bad style, poor and bald in colouring as well as drawing, and resembles China painting, more than enamel.

G. Englehart.

No. 505. *Portraits of a Lady and her two Daughters.*

This is very inferior to the former productions of this artist; it is piteous when the movements of a deserving artist are crab-like.

C. Shirreff.

No. 512. *Two Bacchants.*

This is the best miniature I have seen by this artist, and the most unexceptionable in the room, except No. 386.

W. Craft.

No. 523. *A Portrait in Enamel.*

If there is any merit in the composition of this picture, the person who prepared the colours is intitled to it; if merit consisted in size, it would have the greatest share of all the enamels.

W. Birch.

No. 456. *Portrait of an Artist in Enamel.*

This gentleman executes with more precision than boldness.

P. Jean

P. Jean.

No. 529. *Maternal happiness, in the centre Signora Storace, in the character of My Grandmother; a Turkish-jew, and six others.*

The jew is the best handled portrait of the whole; I have seen better pictures by this artist.

W. Wood.

No. 545. *Nine Portraits:*

This is a young artist and promises to be at the head of his profession.

H. Spicer.

No. 357. *A Portrait of a Gentleman.*

Those who desire an inveterate likeness, involved in a good picture, will apply to this gentleman.

R. Bowyer.

No. 541. *Portrait of a Lady.*

A very large piece of ivory.

A miniature painter, is among artists, what a bachelor is among men: a creature who is reluctantly admitted to be of the same species and order, and who so contracts his movements and journies in so narrow a path, that the great ends of his being are not fulfilled. He may be said to whisper and not talk; to vegetate with caution, but can never be exuberant and generously unfold his masculine properties in the propitious beam of day. No man I am persuaded, can be a miniature painter, with willingness, who has a large and beneficent heart—an Aurelian and a man milliner should congregate in the same parish.

D R A W I N G S.

Mr. Paul Sandby's drawings, No. 328, 367, 381, should be mentioned as exertions of the first order: they are cabinet gems of exquisite note,

Mr.

Mr. Westall has several drawings in a manner somewhat peculiar to himself: they are tinted with what may be termed *nicety*, perhaps with Milk of Roses, and consequently alluring to the vulgar, but are wholly deficient in those grand traits of conception, and truth of outline, which makes the slightest touches of *Parmegiano* so valuable to posterity.

Mr. Chinnery has some portraits, No. 380, which highly pleased me: among the budding candidates for fame, this rising young Artist is the most prominent. His progress has been rapid almost beyond example: he has rather adopted a new style of painting, somewhat after the manner of Cosway.

Mr. M. A. Rooker's drawings are Nature rather too tenderly represented.

Mr. Downman's portraits, No. 360, are *vastly pretty* but not excellent.

Mr. Hodges's Indian Views place him next to Mr. Sandby, in the scale of delineative glory.

Mr. Bartolozzi's drawings of the Human Figure, No. 403 and 404, denote him as the Achilles of the art.

Mr. Wyatt has informed the rich world what *ought* to be done, by his noble designs this year: yet why should Mr. Wyatt give himself this trouble to prove his great powers and knowledge, when an ignorant Bricklayer can *command* all the business of the realm without any?

The SCULPTURE, this year, is lamentably deficient!

This exhibition, on the whole, is such as indicates a rapid decay of that species of merit, which constitutes an able artist, our disciples in the national schools of design, are like our disciples in the varied schools of morality and politeness, chiefly aiming at the acquisition of what a great mind would consider as trivial, and altogether neglecting the nobler branches appertaining to the science.

FINIS.

172

173

174

t

,

3

be

r.

nd

he

bid

ar-

our

ief-

on-

hes

Mr. Westall has several drawings in a manner somewhat peculiar to himself: they are tinted with what may be termed *nicety*, perhaps with Milk of Roses, and consequently alluring to the vulgar, but are wholly deficient in those grand traits of conception, and truth of outline, which makes the slightest touches of *Parmegiano* so valuable to posterity.

Mr. Chinnery has some portraits, No. 380, which highly pleased me: among the budding candidates for fame, this rising young Artist is the most prominent. His progress has been rapid almost beyond example: he has rather adopted a new style of painting, somewhat after the manner of Colway.

Mr. M. A. Rooker's drawings are Nature rather too tenderly represented.

Mr. Downman's portraits, No. 360, are *vastly pretty* but not excellent.

Mr. Hodges's Indian Views place him next to Mr. Sandby, in the scale of delineative glory.

Mr. Bartolozzi's drawings of the Human Figure, No. 403 and 404, denote him as the Achilles of the art.

Mr. Wyatt has informed the rich world what *ought* to be done, by his noble designs this year: yet why should Mr. Wyatt give himself this trouble to prove his great powers and knowledge, when an ignorant Bricklayer can *command* all the business of the realm without any?

The SCULPTURE, this year, is lamentably deficient!

This exhibition, on the whole, is such as indicates a rapid decay of that species of merit, which constitutes an able artist, our disciples in the national schools of design, are like our disciples in the varied schools of morality and politeness, chiefly aiming at the acquisition of what a great mind would consider as trivial, and altogether neglecting the nobler branches appertaining to the science.

FINIS.

23

a

t

,

23

be

lr.

nd

he

pid

ar-

our

ief-

con-

ches